DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 385 853 CS 215 002

AUTHOR Cassebaum, Anne
TITLE Adjuncts with an Attitude?: Attitudes Encountered in the Struggle for Fair Pay and Job Security for Adjunct Faculty.
PUB DATE Mar 95
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (46th, Washington, DC, March 23-25, 1995).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adjunct Faculty; Attitude Change; College Administration; *College Faculty; Department Heads; Higher Education; Nontenured Faculty; *Part Time Faculty; Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS *Faculty Attitudes

ABSTRACT

At the post-secondary level, 38% of teaching is done by adjunct faculty. How did the profession become so divided? The answer goes beyond the academic profession because full-time positions are getting splintered into part-time ones all over the United States, but nevertheless academics make themselves particularly vulnerable because of their attitudes. Sample listings of writing instructor colleagues' attitudes, writing directors and department chairs' attitudes, and college administrators' attitudes illustrate how deep the divisions are in the struggle to obtain fair pay and job security for adjunct faculty. In each case there are attitudes which block change and attitudes which promote change. Hearing and anticipating these attitudes personally and in others may make it easier to bring about change. (TB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Anne Cassebaum

ADJUNCTS WITH AN ATTITUDE?: Attitudes Encountered in the Struggle for Fair Pay and Job Security for Adjunct Faculty

ED 385 853

At the post secondary level, 38% of teaching is done by adjunct faculty. How did our profession become so divided? Why are we in such a weak labor position? The answer goes beyond our own profession as full-time positions get splinterred into part-time ones all over the U.S., but the reason for our vulnerability also lies in the attitudes of our fellow educators. What follows is a listing of attitudes encountered in the struggle to obtain fair pay and job security for adjunct faculty. Hearing our own attitudes and anticipating these attitudes in others may make it easier to bring about change.

COLLEAGUES' ATTITUDES

BLOCKING CHANGE	PROMOTING CHANGE
Who are these new people? I can't even learn their names.	
	Adjuncts are colleagues. We are all doing the same work.
Adjuncts aren't as good as other teachers; we hire them in August sometimes.	
They work for so little; they can't be putting in much time.	
	Adjunct faculty demonstrate all levels of teaching ability and commitment, just as "regular" faculty. They should be evaluated in the same way.
They're lucky, they don't have to do all the committee work and extra stuff we do.	
They don't even come to meetings.	
	Many adjuncts would welcome the opportunity for more involvement in the department, but they need to be paid for this involvement.
We're lucky to have such good people.	
	Adjuncts are educators even if we don't treat them as such.
They're not as loyal to the institution as we are; they're not going to be here	

CS215002

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
A Cassebaum

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

in ten years.

Many adjuncts want continuing employment.

If we consolidated part-time jobs into "regular" ones, fewer adjuncts would have jobs?

How would I feel if my job were divided up into two part-time jobs at a quarter the pay and no health benefits?

Only the fittest survive. I was able to get the kind of job I wanted, so why can't they?

I don't have time to work on adjunct issues.

We've all benefitted from past organizing and professional co-operation, so we need to organize with adjuncts today.

If we paid adjunct faculty on a pro-rated basis, there wouldn't be enough money for our pay increases.

Adjunct faculty belong in our contract negotiations. This division weakens the bargaining position of our whole profession.

They're not as qualified as we are, and don't teach as well.

If that is true, adjuncts should not be teaching. Why are we letting them teach half or more of our first year writing students?

It's fair to pay them reduced wages because they are our graduate students.

Even if they're Ph.D.'s? What "graduate student" benefits do they get?

We prefer, actually, not to hire Ph.D's; it seems unfair and they cost too much. We are giving our adjuncts career opportunities allowing them to teach and develop new courses.

All faculty teach a range of courses.

They don't have professional development or travel money because they don't have a long commitment to the college. Some of them are even teaching at other institutions.

Adjuncts are teaching most of our students.

Unconscious: Adjuncts increase my status.

It's embarrassing how well some adjuncts teach; their courses fill up fast.

We're professionals, and they're not.

Equal pay for equal work.

Teaching is a respected profession. We're not labor, afterall.

The pay adjuncts get comes close to minimum wage. This is a labor issue.

Why don't adjuncts organize themselves.

Adjuncts are the most vulnerable, isolated and temporary of all faculty; full-timers need to organize with adjuncts.

If they're good, they'd get a real job.

With 38% of post-secondary teaching done by adjuncts, the pool of "real" jobs is shrinking.

WRITING DIRECTORS AND CHAIRS

We started a teaching award for adjuncts.

Why have segregated awards?

We gave them certificates of appreciation and a dinner.

If adjuncts are subsidizing the

institution with their low salaries, they deserve at least a tax deduction for a charity contribution.

Training them isn't easy.

We want educators who have had an education not training.

They can come to meetings if they want to.

We pay adjuncts fairly to participate fully in our program.

We provide texts and syllabus for them and monitor closely their

adherence to the curriculum.

Do adjuncts have academic freedom if they cannot choose their own texts or be included in the committee selecting those texts?

We have non-renewable three year terms because it wouldn't be fair to pay adjuncts at this rate for any longer.

Exploitation short or long term is unfair; why add job termination to it?

We're lucky to have such good people, but if we improve their situation, I won't be able to do a national search or hire rhetoric specialists.

We need to convert these positions into "regular" ones. If special qualifications are needed, they are listed in the job description.

We just don't have enough office space for everyone.

Writing conferences are important, so the faculty need office space.

Interviewing adjuncts takes forever.

I work to retain excellent teachers through fair pay.

Unspoken: It will hurt my position/ career to battle with the administration over better pay for adjuncts. I get points for hiring good people cheap.

There is nothing I can do. It is a budget problem.

I value writing, the teaching of writing and the teachers of writing. It's my job to be an advocate for adjuncts.

ADMINISTRATORS

We can't afford to pay them pro-rated or "real" salaries.

Adjuncts are the lowest paid faculty; why should the budget be balanced on their backs?

We need to divide up the available courses, so we don't have to pay

health benefits.

Most adjuncts need health coverage.

Some of them have special expertise and just want to teach one course.
Some of them just teach for a hobby and really don't need the money.

A large percentage of adjuncts seek full time "regular" work.

We can't offer "real" positions because we don't know how long we will need them.

If someone is teaching full time, they are paid at the regular full time rates.

We have adjuncts to meet our changing needs.

Adjuncts' flexibility is important to the college; we need to reward that.

Don't call it exploitation; they're applying for these jobs.

We can't ignore labor history--the long struggle against common practice.

Resources are limited, but it's exciting to see how we do divide up the budget.

Adjunct salaries need to be pro-rated if they are part-time.

We pay the going rate; some places are even worse.

There's an ethical issue here.

If you're good, why are you interested in a position like this.

If we're good, we won't convert "real" positions to adjunct ones.

If I have to pay more, I'll try to hire somebody better.

All faculty are evaluated by the same criteria.

Parents don't understand adjuncts.

It looks bad to have so many adjuncts.

It strengthens a college to have fairly treated and decently paid faculty.

I wish we could get rid of all part-timers.

Flex time is good--it's part-time hours with fair pay and job conditions.

They're surprisingly professional.

How can those who value education exploit educators?

Anne Cassebaum
English Department
2193 CB
Elon College, NC 27244-2020
910 449 6843 - home
910 584 2276 - office/machine

©Anne Cassebaum, March 1995